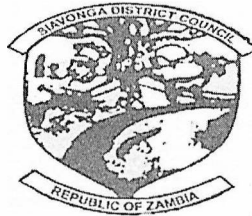
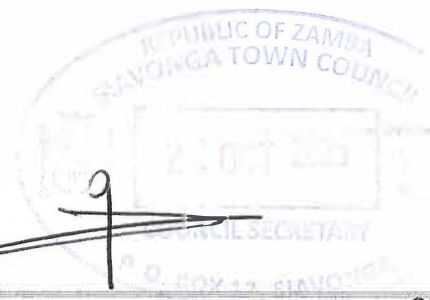


# Siavonga Town Council



## Citizen Engagement plan

2025-2028



Contents

Siavonga Town Council Citizen Engagement Strategy .....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

1. Introduction .....2

    1.1 Background ..... 2

    1.2 Current C.E. Efforts by Siavonga Council .....2

2. Vision, Aim and Objectives ..... 4

3.Approaches and Methods of Engagement ..... 4

4. Implementation Plan .....5

5. Communication Plan ..... 7

6. stakeholder mapping .....8

7. Budget (for the Implementation of the CE Process).....12

8.Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting ..... 13

9. Conclusion ..... 14



## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Citizen Engagement refers to the meaningful participation of individuals in the decision-making processes, activities, and affairs that shape their lives and communities. It is a cornerstone of democratic governance, focusing on involving the public in policy formulation, service delivery, and community projects to ensure transparency, accountability, and cooperating partnership between governing bodies and the populace. This engagement is built upon five fundamental principles: Participation, Access to Information, Transparency, Accountability, and Collaboration.

When implemented effectively, it cultivates citizen empowerment, a stronger sense of public trust, and enhanced ownership over communal outcomes. This leads to more robust democratic practices, improved quality in public decision-making, and greater social inclusivity. By valuing and incorporating a wide range of perspectives and experiences. Citizen Engagement ensures that public policies and initiatives are responsive to the collective needs and aspirations of society. By so doing the general public will feel a sense that every decision made whether budget implementation or the project cycle was initiated by them.

This document subsequently details the approaches undertaken by Siavonga Town Council to meet its statutory and policy mandates by fostering effective Citizen Engagement across the district.

### 1.2 Current C.E. Efforts by Siavonga Town Council

The Council has formulated a comprehensive Citizen Engagement Plan. Although its initial development was undertaken for a project funded by the Zambia Devolution Support Programme, the Council has dedicated significant effort and resources to ensure this plan is all-inclusive. It has been designed to serve as a formal guideline for engaging citizens throughout both the budgeting and project cycle processes.

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Objectives	Engagement Methods	Frequency	Responsibility
Local Community	- Inform about project scope and benefits	- Community meetings	Once / As required	Project Management Team
	- Address concerns about land acquisition and disruption	- Public consultations	Once / As required	
	- Ensure feedback is integrated into the project	- Printed notices and flyers	Once / As required	



<b>Local Government</b>	- Obtain necessary permits and approvals	- Formal consultations	Before major milestones	Project Legal and Compliance Team
	- Ensure compliance with local laws and regulations	- Written submissions/reports		
<b>Environmental Authorities</b>	- Ensure environmental standards are met	- Site visits and inspections	During preparation and construction phases	Environmental Management Team
	- Monitor mitigation of environmental impacts	- Environmental reports	Quarterly	
<b>Traditional Leaders (Councilors)</b>	- Gain support for the project	- Direct meetings	Regularly	Community Liaison Officers / Public Relations Officer
	- Ensure cultural considerations are respected	- Cultural sensitization programs		Project Management Team (Council Management)
<b>Contractors &amp; Suppliers</b>	- Coordinate project implementation	- Project progress meetings	Weekly	Project Manager
	- Ensure delivery of materials and services	- Phone calls/emails	When needed	Procurement / Project Manager
<b>Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Central Government</b>	- Workshops and participatory meetings	Review meetings	Bi-monthly	Social Safeguard Specialist
	- Ensure transparency and accountability	- Reports and documentation	As required	Procurement / Project Manager and Public Relations Officer
<b>Funding Agencies</b>	- Ensure project aligns with funding requirements	- Progress reports	Quarterly	Finance and Project Manager
	- Update on project implementation	- Review meetings	Quarterly or As required	Project Manager
<b>Media</b>	Projects updates	- Press releases and media briefings	As required	Public Relations Officer
	- Manage public perception	- Interviews and social media updates		

The model of CE above has made it possible for the Local Authority to expand the target groups for more inclusive participation in CE activities such as people living with disabilities, women, community and traditional leaders etc



## **2 Vision, Aim and Objectives**

### **2.1 Vision**

To establish an inclusive, transparent, and participatory environment that empowers citizens to actively contribute to the development initiatives and decision-making processes of the Siavonga Town Council by 2028.

### **2.2 Aim**

This Strategy aims to establish a structured framework for citizen engagement throughout the budgetary and project cycles. Its purpose is to foster transparency, accountability, and inclusivity within the Council's public financial management.

### **2.3 Objectives**

1. To enhance citizen awareness and comprehension of the budgetary and project cycle processes.
2. To facilitate greater citizen inclusion in the decision-making and prioritization of budgets and projects.
3. To strengthen the mechanisms for citizen-led monitoring of budget execution and project implementation.

## **3. Approaches and Methods of Engagement**

The Siavonga Council team will employ the following initiatives to ensure inclusive engagement, acknowledging the diverse backgrounds of its community members. The approach will carefully consider the nature of interaction between citizens and civic leaders to foster a reciprocal, rather than one-sided, process. A citizen engagement is an ongoing endeavor, the Council intends to utilize a variety of avenues and mechanisms to communicate with different stakeholders. The engagement methods will include:

### **A. Citizen Participation in Key Decision-Making and Information Dissemination:**

Circulating budget hearing presentations to stakeholders in advance to solicit feedback on program/sub-program allocations, key outputs, and selected projects.

Strengthening Citizen Engagement in project prioritization to establish an effective forum for informed consultation with Ward Development Committees (WDCs).

### **B. Citizen Monitoring of Budget and Project Implementation:**

Promoting Citizen Engagement during project implementation by creating consistent opportunities for citizens and local structures to monitor progress.

Enhancing the reporting of budget implementation outputs to the public through methods such as:

Utilizing technology for real-time reporting on project progress.

Publishing regular updates and performance reports.

Establishing accessible channels for submitting concerns and feedback.

Including selected stakeholders as part of the official teams conducting council monitoring visits.



#### 4. Implementation Plan

The implementation of the Citizen Engagement Strategy (CES) will be guided by the following plan:

1. **Conduct an assessment** of the current state of citizen engagement within the budgetary process and other relevant council matters.
2. **Identify specific engagement opportunities** and develop a detailed framework outlining associated timelines and responsibilities, as exemplified in Table 1 below.
3. **Map key Stakeholders**, specifying their respective levels and required frequency of engagement with the Council.

The stakeholders identified for engagement encompass a broad spectrum of the community, including:

Citizens at large

Ward Development Committees (WDCs)

Government agencies at various levels

Community-based organizations

Traditional, Religious, and Community Leaders

Business representatives

Civil society groups

Media outlets

Any other groups within the community potentially affected by council activities.

BUDGET STAGE	KEY FEATURES/ACTIVITIES	STAKEHOLDER CATEGORY INVOLVED	TIMELINE
Preparation for budget formulation	i. LAs provide communities with SEP giving proposed dates for consultation	Community owners, members, youth, women) (business community fish traders, youth, women)	By 31 <sup>st</sup> August
	ii. LAs provide WDCs with a list of proposed projects for consideration in this budget cycle as well as a list of ongoing projects and completed projects for the past 2 years.	WDCs, Councilors	By 30 <sup>th</sup> September
	iii. Using the project lists provided, communities may accept or reject project proposals and make their own proposals for development projects and activities for	Communities, Councilors, Traditional leaders, WDCs, and	By 30 <sup>th</sup> September



	their Wards to be included in the budget based on their priorities		
	iv. LAs produce a summarized stakeholder report from all Wards and submit report to MLGRD.	Councilors, Traditional Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	By 31 <sup>st</sup> October
	v. Conduct budget hearings & Town Hall meetings.	Councilors, Traditional Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	By 31 <sup>st</sup> October
	vi. The Town Clerk/Council Secretary shall present the reports to the full council.	All the stakeholders	By 31 <sup>st</sup> October
	vii. Feedback meetings to WDCs on what projects and activities have been included in the budget	Councilors, Traditional Religious leaders, NGOs and community members	30 <sup>th</sup> November
	iii. Reports including minutes must be submitted to the PLGOs office for review and consolidation for onward submission to MLGRD.	Budget team	30 <sup>th</sup> November
	ix. MLGRD will submit the consolidated reports to MoFNP.	MLGRD	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December
Budget approval (public awareness of budget details)	i. Review the proposed budget and assess whether input from community, especially vulnerable groups i.e. women, PWDs and children has been incorporated.	NGOs, Councilors Traditional and Religious Leaders	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December
	ii. Feedback to WDCs and other stakeholders of the final approved budget	NGOs, Councilors, religious leaders & youth, women, community members	By 31 <sup>st</sup> January
Budget execution and monitoring (for transparency in budget implementation)	i. Track the effective utilisation of funds in line with planned activities.	NGOs, Councilors, religious leaders & youth, women, community members	Quarterly
	ii. Report back on a regular basis to WDCs on implementation of activities and projects		Quarterly
Budget evaluation and Review	i. Evaluate the impact of allocated funds, focusing on agreed upon programmes with a bias towards gender, persons with disabilities, child-related and climate change outcomes.	LA, NGOs, Councilors Traditional and Religious Leaders	Quarterly

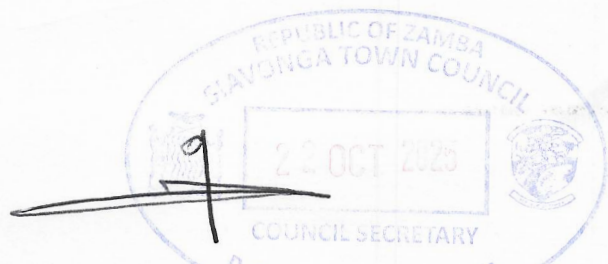
**Table 1: Proposed Stakeholder Engagement Plan Summary Table**



#### 4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Effective citizen engagement plan depends on collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders. The table below shows the key stakeholders of the local authority will engage, detailing their roles and levels of participation throughout and project cycles.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	ROLE IN ENGAGEMENT	LEVEL/PERIOD OF ENGAGEMENT	INFLUENCE/ POWER
Elected officials	Present community interests, approve projects, facilitate	Continuous throughout budget and activity cycle: project-specific	<b>High:</b> formal decision-making authority: can approve/endorse



	advocacy, support CE	consultations	projects and policies
Citizen general public, including youths, women, men children, PWDs, elderly	Provide input, identify priorities, participate in budget hearings and monitoring	Continuous throughout the LA activity cycle	<b>High:</b> directly shape priorities, proposals and feedback: collective voice drives decisions
Ward development committees (WDCs)	Mobilize communities, coordinate input at ward level, provide feedback	Continuous	<b>Medium:</b> facilitate citizen input: limited independent decision-making
Neighbourhood Health Committees	Support in mobilizing health related priorities	As needed during consultations	<b>Medium:</b> facilitate citizen input: limited independent decision making
Traditional and community leaders	Facilitate community mobilization provide leadership	Continuous	<b>High:</b> gatekeepers: strong influence on community participation and acceptance
Private sector/ business	Provide development input, partnerships	Project-specific or annual	<b>Medium:</b> influence through resources and partnerships
Media ( radio, TV, print, social media)	Disseminate information, create awareness, promote accountability	Throughout cycle	<b>High:</b> shape the public perception and indirectly influence decisions
Government Agencies	Oversight, consolidation of reports, technical guidance	At all stages	<b>High:</b> formal authority and regulatory



#### 4. Communication Plan

**Table 2: Proposed Communication Plan Summary**

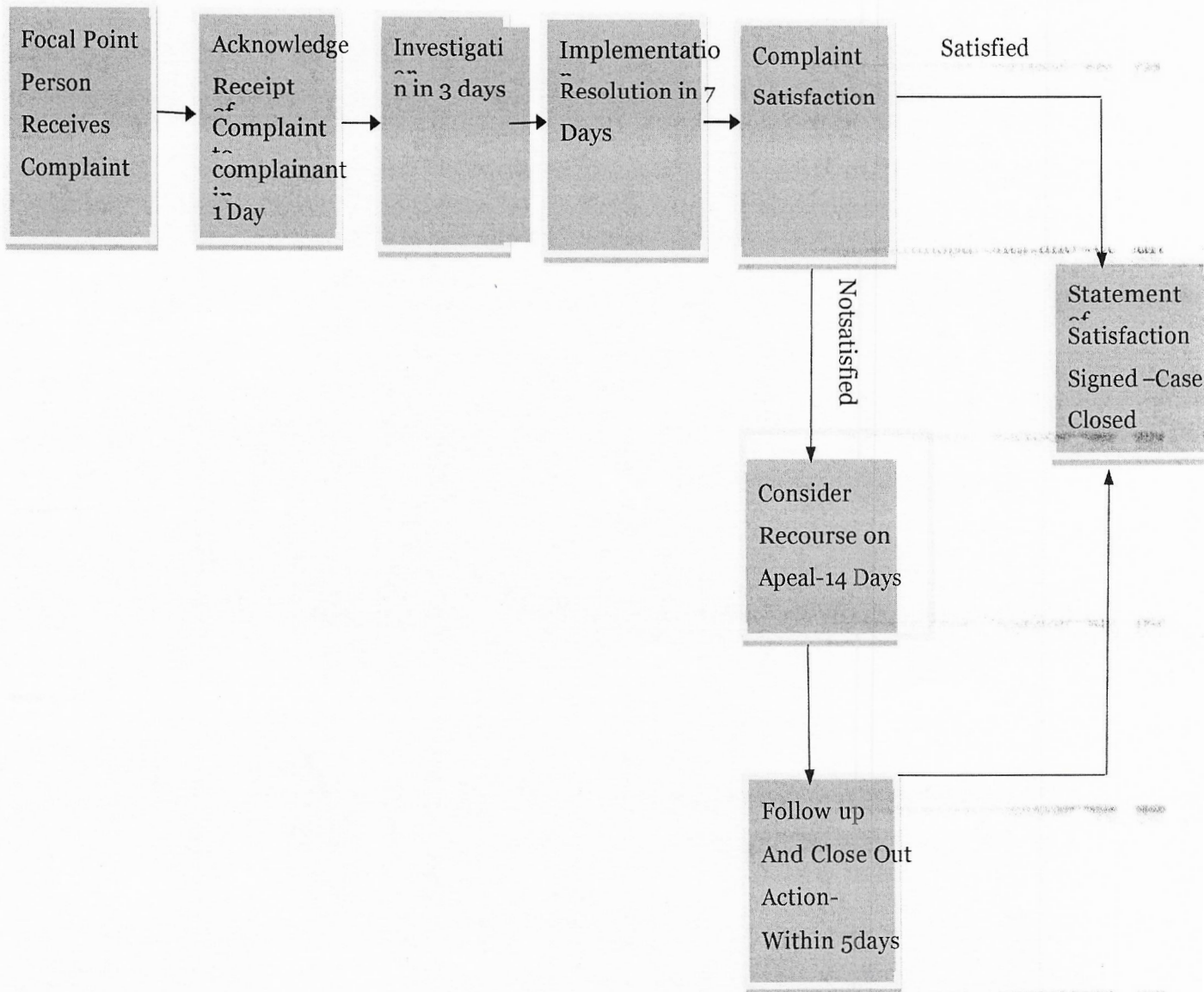
DELIVERABLE/ ACTIVITY	TARGET STAKEHOLDERS	FREQUENCY	PROPOSED TIMELINE/ DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNICATION METHOD	COMMENT
Budget Consultations	Local Community	Once / As required		Director Finance	Community meetings	
Presentation of the Budget	Local Government		By end of third quarter	Director Finance	Written submissions/ reports	
Environmental and Management risks	Environmental Authorities	Quarterly	As required	Director Planning Director Engineering	Written submissions/ reports	
Budget/project s/consultations	Traditional Leaders (Councilors)	Regularly	As required	Public Relations Officer	Courtesy Calls Notices	
Budget/Project/ Policies Consultations	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Central Government	Quarterly	As required	Director Finance	Written submissions/m eeting	
Budget/Project/ Policies	WDC	Quarterly	As required	Director Planning	Written submissions/m eeting	



## GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

The Grievance Redress Mechanism below has been designed to support the sustainable budgeting and implementation of the budget process in Siavonga district. The mechanism helps to address all issues, problems, or claims, which might arise during budgeting and budget implementation process. To ensure stakeholder participation, the grievance redress mechanism is easily accessible, confidential, transparent, and culturally acceptable.

A focal point person has been appointed with the responsibility of receiving complaints from clients, individuals, and communities. This complaint is then escalated to the right person or department for investigation and handled within the stipulated days as highlighted in the diagram below.



5. Budget (for the Implementation of the CE Process)

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Methods	Budget
Community Members /	- Community meetings	K35,000
	- Public consultations	K25,000
	- Printed notices and flyers, cohort meetings	K2,500
Local Government	- Formal consultations	K10,000
	- Written submissions/reports	K2,000
Environmental Authorities	- Site visits and inspections	K4,500
	- Environmental reports	K2,000
Traditional Leaders (Councilors)	- Direct meetings	K5,000
	- Cultural sensitization programs	K3500
Contractors & Suppliers	- Project progress meetings	K7,000
	- Phone calls/emails	K1000
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Central Government	Review meetings	K5000
	- Reports and documentation	K4,000
Funding Agencies	- Progress reports	K1,000
	- Review meetings	K5,000
Media	- Press releases and media briefings	K10,000
	- Interviews, social media and website updates	K10,000



## **7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting**

The Siavonga Town Council has institutionalized a systematic process for the routine collection and analysis of data to monitor project progress. The local authority's monitoring systems facilitate project and programme implementation by generating accurate, evidence-based reports, thereby fostering organizational learning and knowledge sharing. This is achieved by utilizing an inclusive monitoring approach, conducting joint assessments at regular intervals with key district stakeholders. This collaboration ensures a shared understanding of project goals and establishes a sustainable system from the outset of implementation. A dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan has been developed to guide the planning, management, reporting, and evaluation of the project. Specific indicators have been established to measure project outputs, outcomes, and impact.

### **Output Monitoring**

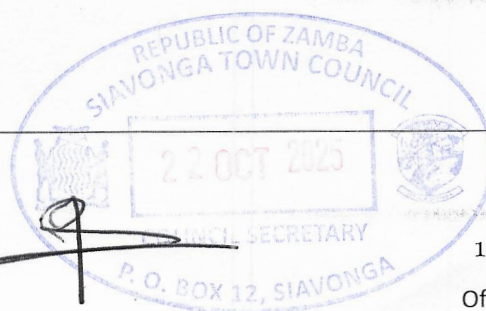
Monthly narrative reports, derived from activities conducted during the reporting period, will be submitted. These reports will detail achievements, discrepancies from the previous month, plans for the upcoming month, and any challenges encountered.

### **Outcome Monitoring**

Process evaluation will be conducted through routine data collection to monitor and assess whether community and institution-based activities are being implemented as planned. This kind of monitoring includes specific indicators, data collection methods and criteria that the council will deploy for success to provide evidence for decision making and to learn from the performance. internal monitoring will be integrated at all levels of project implementation and sustained throughout its duration. Outputs and indicators will be analyzed to measure the extent and fidelity of the implementation.

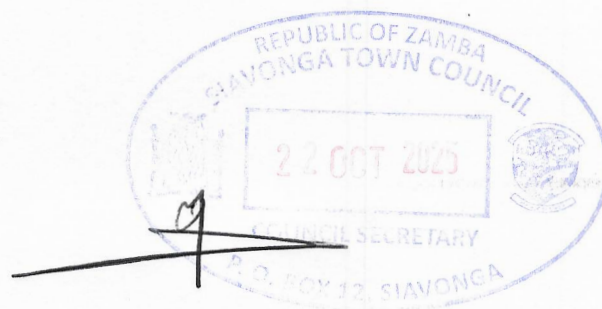
### **Outcome Evaluation**

The primary method for assessing outcomes will be a comparison of pre- and post-intervention data at both the individual and institutional levels among targeted beneficiaries. Data for measuring these individual and community-level outcomes will be gathered through routine household visits, individual interviews, and case studies.



## Monitoring and Reporting Roles

Monitoring Event	Who	Frequency	Methodology	Reporting format
Activity monitoring in the field	Ward Development Committee (WDC)	Monthly	Visits, consultation, reports	Written and photos
Activity monitoring in the field	Government officers Siavonga Town Council (Socio-Economic Planner, Director Planning, Director Finance, Director Engineering)	Quarterly	Visits, reflection, consultation, reports	Written and photos
Update of financial records	Director Finance Finance supervisor District Accountant	Monthly	Updates based on expenses and purchases made	Written to the Council Secretary
Progress report to Donor	Council secretary	Monthly Quarterly Annual	Report against project documents based on monitoring and reports from the field as compiled by the Project Coordinator	Written (Financial and narrative)
Evaluation	Donor	End of project	Engage an external consultant to conduct an end of project evaluation	Evaluation report



## 8. Conclusion

The formulation of this Citizen Engagement Strategy (CES) underscores the Council's recognition of the vital role public participation plays in fostering democratic governance and ensuring effective, people-driven development through public expenditure. The Council is unequivocally committed to upholding the principles of inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability throughout all phases of the budgeting and implementation cycle. All stakeholders and the general public are hereby encouraged to actively engage with the Council on matters pertaining to project identification, selection, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as the entire budget execution process.

